expenses of Rs. 2252 crores on account of travelling, communication, sales, freight, transportation, handling and other expenses for 1994-95;

(c) whether Indian Oil Corporation are charging freight and transportation cost through its pipelines of about 5293 kms., at par with the Railway freight for transporting Petroleum products; and

(d) if not, what are the rates being charged for transportation through pipelines and by the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) Yest Sir.

(b) As per the accounting principles and practices, recovery of charges towards freight and transportation from bulk consumers including retail outlets are accounted as a part of turnover on gross basis. These recoveries are as per the rates fixed by Government from time to time in respect of products, prices of which are controlled by the Government. Accordingly, the expenses are incurred and also accounted for under the relevant hands of accounts on gross basis. These are also the requirements of Schedule VI to the Companies Act, 1956.

(c) and (d) Under the existing pricing mechanism applicable to administered products, through the product may be moved through pipeline, the transportation charges equivalent to frozen Notional Railway freight applicable pre-1.12.86 alongwith increases effected in 1992 and 1995 is being recovered from the customer. However, in exceptional cases, even transportation cost of pipeline is being recovered from consumer.

Increasing the production from oilfields

632. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the PRIME MINISTER pleased to state:

(a) the strategy devised to increase domestic production from the existing oilfields;

(b) whether Government propose to delink services sector from oil exploration companies, to enable them to concentrate on more production; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) The production from the existing fields is sought to be increased through—

- — Implementation of new projects/ schemes and additional development of existing fields.
- — Implementation FOR Schemes and extending some of EOR Schemes from pilot scale to full scale field application.
- — Implementation of specialised technologies such as ERD, side track, horizontal and drain hole drilling.
- — Obtaining services of international experts wherever considered necessary.
- — 3-D seismic survey of the oil fields.
- — Rectificatory measures such as aggressive workovers, use of specialised technologies like long/ short drift side track, drain hole have been planned for revival of sick wells which still have potential.

(b) and (c) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government at present.

Development of an Oil Tank farm by the London based Foresight Group

633. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the PRIME MINSITER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a London-based Foresight Group, promoted by an NRI, is planning a project in India to develop an oil tank farm for storage of crude oil, refined petroleum products and Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG);

(b) whether the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) has given its approval for the said project; and

(c) if so, in what manner various companies and corporations are proposed to participate in this venture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Divers engaged by ONGC for off-shore Operation

634. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of divers engaged by the ONGC for off-shore operations;

(b) the nature of duties that those divers perform;

(c) whether many foreign divers have been hired recently by the ONGC at much higher wages, than those being paid to the Indian divers; and

(d) if so, the reasons for hiring foreign divers and paying higher wages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) ONGC Ltd. has not directly engaged any divers for its off-shore operations. The Corporation engages the services of reputed and experienced Diving Agencies on contract, strictly based on need.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

कच्चे तेल पर लगाया जाने वाला उपकर

635. श्री राम जेठमलानी: क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 4 जनवरी, 1997 के "दि फाइनेंशियल एक्सप्रेस" में "मिनिस्ट्री आरक फार मॉर फण्ड्स फ्रोम आयल सेस एकाउंट" शीर्षक से प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह सच है कि सरकार द्वारा कच्चे तेल के उत्पादन पर उपकर के माध्यम से प्रति टन 900 रु० के हिसाब से वसूली की जाती है; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो तत्संबंधी तथ्य क्या है?

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री टी० आर० बालु): (क) दिनांक 4 जनवरी, 1997 के फाइनेंशियल एक्सप्रेस के दिल्ली संस्करण में ऐसा कोई समाचार प्रकाशित नहीं हुआ है।

(ख) यह सत्य है कि 900/-रु० प्रति टन की दर से उपकर वसूल किया जाता है।

(ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

Private LPG Distributors in Punjab, Haryana and H.P.

636. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG distributors of private sector oil companies functioning in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh as on the 31st January, 1997;

(b) the total number of consumers registerd with these companies;

(c) the number of registrants in the waiting list; and

(d) by when all the registrants in these States are likely to get LPG connections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (T. R. BAALU): (a) to (d) During February 1993, Government had permitted, under the parallel marketing scheme, private entrepreneurs to import and market LPG, using/setting up their own infrastructure and distribution network, at market determined prices, under their own terms. Private parties are not required to obtain any licence from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for undertaking activities under the scheme. They are, however, required to